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Firm File Reference: BAAS5002AP

Date: March 29, 2004

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TO: Examiner N. Legesse
USPTO, GAU 3711
Telecopier Number: 703/872-9306

FROM: Andrew T. Prokopetz, Reg. No. 52,134
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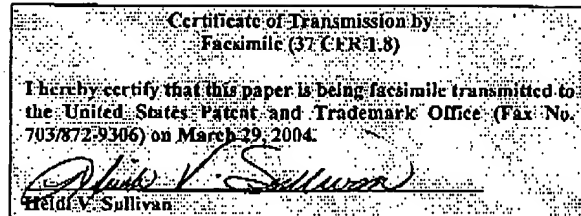
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MESSAGE: Please see the following page(s).

PATENT**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Appl. No. : 09/881,237 Confirmation No.: 7545
Applicant : Bickel et al.
Filed : June 15, 2001
TC/A.U. : 3711
Examiner : N. Legesse
Docket No. : BAAS5002AP
Customer No. : 029889



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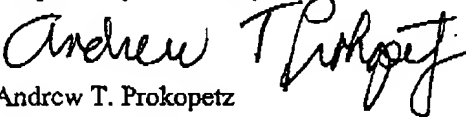
REQUEST FOR CLARIFIED OFFICE ACTION

Sir:

Applicants are in receipt of the Office Action dated March 24, 2004, with regard to the above-identified patent application. The Office Action Summary indicates that the March 24, 2004 Office Action is "[R]esponsive to communication(s) filed on 26 February 2004." Applicants have had no communication with the Patent Office pertaining to this application since January 5, 2004, the date on which the previous Response to Office Action and Amendment was filed.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner provide to them either: a) a copy of any communications filed with the Patent Office after the date of January 5, 2004 pertaining to this application; b) a written record of any telephonic interviews held with Applicants or their patent counsel after the date of January 5, 2004; or c) provide Applicants with a clarified Office Action indicating the correct date to which this Office Action is in response.

Respectfully submitted,



Andrew T. Prokopetz
Reg. No. 52,134
Attorney for Applicants

Customer No. 029889
919/683-5514
Dated: March 29, 2004